



The m100 Gets a Big Brother

Feature By Denny Atkin

It's a new day, and there's a new Palm device. Actually, Palm's new \$199 **m105** looks very familiar. The basic hardware is identical to the m100 handheld released earlier this year. Inside, though, you'll find a spacious 8MB of memory, giving you more room for memory-hungry applications such as AvantGo.

Another change is the inclusion of a serial HotSync cradle instead of the travel cable shipped with the m100. Although this gives you somewhere to rest the m100 when you're not using it, we kind of liked the flexibility the cable provided. Not a big deal, as the cable's available separately.

Finally, the m100 is bundled with Palm's **Mobile Internet Kit** CD. This package adds Palm VII-series web-clipping capabilities to any Palm device running OS 3.5. It also includes an older version of the MultiMail email program, an SMS messaging program, and a WAP browser. Alas, there's no standard web browser in the package. Palm touts the Mobile Internet Kit for its connectivity to various cell phones, but the ability to use PQA web clipping apps is useful with a standard modem as well.

Ironically, there's still no dedicated modem available for the m100 series. However, in addition to using a cell phone via a cable or infrared connection, you can also use the **Diamond Mako 56K Travel Modem**. Reviewed in last week's issue, this mouse-sized modem uses an infrared connection to communicate with virtually any Palm device.

Some readers have written in expressing frustration that the m105 doesn't have flash memory, meaning that the operating system can't be upgraded and there's no safe "emergency storage" for vital drivers and databases. That's a legitimate complaint, certainly, but we're certain that Palm's goals were to keep the price as low as possible and to avoid the product backlogs

caused by last year's flash memory shortages. While savvy users will lament the missing flexibility of flash memory, the vast majority of mass-market users will never know what they're missing.

Overall, the Palm m105 isn't really an advance over previous products, but it's a nice evolution of the m100. We're very pleased to see an entry-level model with 8MB of memory; we hope 2MB devices will soon be a distant memory. Also, the bundling



of the Mobile Internet Kit is a nice bonus; it includes many of the capabilities that will be coming in Palm OS 4.0, making the lack of upgradeability less of an issue.

We expect the m105 to be just the first of a series of new Palm devices to be announced in the next couple of months. Rumor has it that Palm will announce the m500 (mono) and m505 (color) devices at the **CeBit** show at the end of this month. These supposedly are similar to the Palm V, but they will purportedly include the new USB-capable cradle connector, an SD card expansion slot, and Palm OS 4.0.

Review PDA Starter Kit

\$49; CompanionLink, www.companionlink.com

CompanionLink's PDA Starter Kit is an interesting collection of products for maintaining, protecting, and using your Palm device. Even though we wouldn't use all the products ourselves, it's still a good deal for the price. The kit includes a case from Incipio. It's a nice, basic black case, but it uses Velcro to keep your handheld in place—not our preferred method. We liked the 12 Perfect Screen cleaning kits, two-piece sets that would easily clean two PDAs and our

TrueTip finger styluses are included—these are great for pointing and clicking, but it takes a certain kind of person to master finger-Graffiti, and we're not that kind of people. Finally, you'll find two lost & found identification labels from stuffbak.com. These are great—just attach them to your handheld and your cell phone, then register on the company's site. The company offers a small reward to folks who find lost devices, and you can offer



an addition reward if you choose. If your device is found, pay StuffBak \$14.95 plus shipping and they'll get it back to you. --Denny Atkin

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News

Deluxe Drop

Handspring has responded to the Palm m105 by offering a \$50 rebate on the Visor Deluxe, bringing it to the same \$199 price after rebate. You won't get the Mobile Internet Kit or the m100's sleek design, but the Deluxe's Springboard slot offers expansion potential well beyond the m105's.

m500 Killer?

Now even rumored products are battling it out. Palm hasn't even announced its m50x series, and already we're hearing talk a competitor from Handspring, the Visor Edge. Supposedly this is a metal-cased, Palm V-sized monochrome handheld with a clip on "sled" containing a Springboard slot. Handspring's mum on the Edge, but Edge accessories showed up briefly on the Staples.com web site on Monday.

Developer's Marketplace

Handspring has launched a **developer's marketplace**, where developers can meet and share resources. If you have a product but need marketing assistance, or you have an idea but need to find a programmer to program it or a manufacturer to make it, check it out.

New Products

SplashPhoto

SplashData's SplashPhoto is a picture viewer for monochrome and color Palm devices. One unique, welcome feature is a thumbnail view that lets you quickly find specific images. <http://www.splashdata.com/>

FlipCover

Tired of looking for somewhere to put your Visor's cover when you're not using it? Check out the FlipCover, which inserts into your Springboard slot and lets you flip the cover behind the Visor when it's not in use. Adapters are available for existing Springboards. <http://www.flipcover.com>

FlipClip

Another Visor cover alternative is the FlipClip, a small clip-on adapter that lets you use Palm III-style flip covers on the Visor. The Palm covers are a bit of a loose fit, but Tactilis is designing a new cover specifically for the Visor. <http://www.tactilis.com>